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Inaudible Sympathy.

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It was said, I think, of Macaulay that, although he was an excellent talker, those who were much in his company could not but be struck with his "extraordinary flashes of silence." Here, indeed, there is proof that it is sometimes wise to hold one's tongue, and that the profoundest sympathy with what is passing at the moment is not always audibly expressed. I have now in my recollection an instance of a man, highly cultivated both in literature and the arts, who prided himself upon the belief that he had educated his daughters to become "good listeners;" and, in truth, I have never met more intelligent guests in an assemblage where anything was said worth hearing. "Sir, if you do not mean anything, do not say anything," was Dr. Johnson's rebuke to a mere talker; but I might go further, and advise such persons not to say anything unless what they "mean" will compensate us for the valuable time they would occupy. When we are in the presence of men endowed with a special gift, it is good to train ourselves to a mute admiration of this gift. It must be remembered that it is a great power to compel an audience to listen, and all who possess this power, as a rule, rank higher than those who are constantly drawing forth expressions of approval; for where the personal obtrudes, the attention is so distracted that the judgment slumbers.

To apply this fact to the drama, it is necessary only to recall to mind those actors who, holding their auditors breathless throughout entire scenes, tacitly forbid applause, and to contrast them with those who, seeking for audible marks of approbation, are perpetually "making points." As there is a grief that lies too deep for tears, there must be an appreciation of sublimity in art too profound to be expressed by noisy demonstrations of gratification; and this feeling it should be the actor's art to reach, if he would win rather an enduring fame than a temporary notoriety. The decline of the stage as a vehicle for the representation of human feelings and actions may be dated from the time when the actor obtruded himself beyond the author, and sought his own glorification at the expense of the drama. An effective speech, a good exit, an exciting situation, became positively necessary when the worship of the executant was the one thing for the management to foster; and "sensational pieces" arose on the ruins of the plays which depended for their success upon carefully-written dialogue, variety of character, and a well-constructed plot. But, although the Drama has thus degenerated, we do not find that when anything good is placed before them, our audiences, as a rule, destroy the effect by undue and indiscriminate applause. Portia, for instance, in the trial-scene of *The Merchant of Venice*, at the conclusion of her speech upon Mercy, is not called forward to the footlights to make a curtsy and pick up bouquets. Hamlet is not made to take up Yorick's skull, after he has thrown it down, and deliver his oration upon life and death to Horatio over again. True it is that, within the recollection of many, an encore was attempted in a tragedy; but this good-humored joke only proved how utterly absurd such a proceeding would be were it intended in earnest. An amateur—known as *Romeo Coates*, from his always acting this part—finding the applause continue, and a demand raised for a repetition of his dying scene, actually believed that this ovation was a compli-

ment to his acting, and would probably have died once more, in obedience to the request, had he not brought down the laughter of the house by innocently saying to the actor who bent over him, "Do you think they mean it?"

It is scarcely in accordance with the prevailing notion that the taste for the greatest musical works is very rapidly spreading, to assert that the audible sympathy which in a theatre is under somewhat reasonable control, should, in the opera-house and concert-room, be so recklessly shown as utterly to ruin the poetry of the art. Yet that such is the case can be proved by the experience of all in the habit of attending musical performances. At the Opera it is thoroughly understood that the dramatic action is to be suspended whenever a show-piece has been sung, the vocalist being overwhelmed with applause whilst the rest of the company either look on or help the favorite of the evening to gather up the floral offerings which are showered upon the stage. If an encore should be insisted upon, the absurdity of repeating the expression of feeling I have pointed out as impossible to occur in a play is here enacted without a show of protest, the few intelligent dissenters from such an anomaly being compelled to silence by the majority. Certainly a very decided stand was made against this system by a portion of the audience during the late representation of Wagner's *Lohengrin* at the Royal Italian Opera; but, curiously enough, in spite of such manifestation, in this very Opera occurred one of the most glaring instances of thoughtless encores I have ever witnessed—the assembled warriors in the first act, who express in a highly dramatic chorus their wonder at the distant appearance of Lohengrin, in a skiff, drawn by a swan, being compelled to be astonished over again at his approach, although Lohengrin had in the meanwhile arrived in front of the audience, and was waiting to sing the farewell to his trusty guide.

These interruptions to the continuity of dramatic action by the clamorous demands of the many are of course so obviously absurd as to strike every thoughtful listener in an Opera-house; but we have equal violence offered to art in our concert-rooms. Applause constantly breaks in where an effective passage has been well played or sung; and it appears a recognized fashion to drown the purely orchestral portion of a Concerto by a tumultuous burst of delight at the solo performer, which he or she, despite the enormity of such a proceeding, is expected to acknowledge. It might be imagined that the concertos of Beethoven, Mendelssohn and many others are constructed so as to render such a desecration of a composition impossible; but the glorification of the executant has so far superseded the "inaudible sympathy" which the creation of a great master should inspire, that even those whose better judgment might recoil from such an action in a more artistic atmosphere are often led by custom to join in the applause. During the performance of a Symphony it is certainly not unusual to interrupt the work by marks of satisfaction whenever a particular passage is effectively given, and plaudits are therefore reserved for the conclusion of each movement. Here, however, occurs a dilemma which it is difficult to meet; for it is impossible to say whether the applause is bestowed upon the music or its execution. Somebody, nevertheless, must recognize it, and as the work is often by a deceased composer, and each instrumentalist cannot conveniently make his obeisance to the audience in front of his desk, the conductor usually

turns round and bows himself. Surely absurdity can no further go. Solo vocalists, from experience, know perfectly well how to draw forth a solid round of applause; and, even at the sacrifice of the intention of the composer, they make the best use of this knowledge. The encore, although of course not so absolutely ridiculous as when occurring in an Opera, is almost always opposed to the wishes of a minority of the auditors; but, as any expression of dissatisfaction might be interpreted by the artist as a slur upon the manner in which a composition has been rendered, it is seldom that many voices are raised in dissent; sometimes, indeed, an unseemly battle rages between the opposing factions, yet few can doubt on which side the victory will invariably lie.

But it may be said that vocalists and instrumentalists who come before the public require constant applause as a stimulus to their exertions, and that they have no other method of ascertaining what impression they have made upon their audience. To this I would reply that nowhere is one of the grandest forms of musical art—the Oratorio—so thoroughly appreciated as in a Cathedral, where even the faintest murmur of applause is strictly prohibited. Here the eloquence of the music is in no degree deprived of its mighty power by the clapping of hands or the inexorable demands for certain portions of a work to be repeated. The feeling of devotion called forth at the commencement by the sacred character of the composition is never for a moment disturbed; one unbroken sequence of ideas is presented to the audience in a manner so perfect that the execution seems a component portion of the work; and although there is a consciousness with the listeners that every department, both in the orchestra and choir, is thoroughly efficient, the audible expression of this consciousness, even if it were permitted, would seem a sacrilege to all whose thoughts are centred upon the sublimity of the music itself. Will it be asserted, then, by any executant that this "inaudible sympathy" is not fully apparent to all concerned in the performance of the Oratorio? Nay, more—that the deep and earnest attention of the audience during a solo, and a half-suppressed emotion at the close, do not convey a higher tribute of admiration to a sensitive vocalist than the ringing plaudits which can only be replied to by bows and curtsies, even if it do not lead to that still more absurd acknowledgment of public favor, the repetition of the entire piece! Surely at the Three Choir Festivals, where perfect silence reigns, the effect produced by a solo singer is as obvious as at the Opera—indeed, even more so, for vehement applause at our lyrical establishments has now so little to do with real success, that the more impassive listener has been taught to regard it, like the cheers of a mob in the streets during the progress of a noted personage, as a necessary noise, but little indicative of the true feeling of the people.

All who have faith in the effect of musical education must feel that the remedy for this evil will grow out of the advanced intelligence of our audiences. The only reason why the most interesting points of a drama are not constantly interrupted by violent applause and demonstrations of delight is that the listeners understand what they are hearing, and will not, in consequence, allow the interest to be broken. When, therefore, they are equally capable of comprehending the meaning and construction of a musical composition, they will repress all attempt to lavish marks of reward upon executants during its progress. "Inau-

dible sympathy" is not only the truest homage to the work, but to the worker; and any audible recognition of an artist's powers should be limited to appropriate times and places. That this desirable reform will gradually be effected there can be no doubt; and we must learn, therefore, patiently to wait. Meantime, however, it is good that these truths should be occasionally spoken, for they may not only assist in helping forward a more healthful appreciation of art in this country, but in proving to the composer that his real duty lies rather in endeavoring to strengthen the judgment of his hearers than in courting their favor by writing down to their weak points.

"Tristan and Isolde" in Berlin.

[Correspondence of the *London Musical World*.]

The long-expected event, the event looked forward to with such extraordinary curiosity, has at length come off. Richard Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* has been performed at the Royal Opera-house before an audience such as is seldom found within the walls of that edifice. Not a seat was empty, though the ordinary "high" prices of admission were doubled by order of the Intendant-General, Herr von Hülsen, while the outside ticket-sellers charged twenty thalers for a place in the pit. So much the better for Wagner and his Grand-National-Festival-Stage-Play-Tetralogical-Trilogy at Bayreuth, to which the Emperor, who was present on the first night, as he had been present at the grand rehearsal, ordered the receipts to be given. The Wagnerites were naturally wild with delight, and picture Wagner giving up the triumphal car which he now uses. After what has happened, they regard it as a one horse affair, and think their master ought to exchange it for a more brilliant vehicle drawn by two crowned heads, an Imperial and a Royal one, instead of by a king only, as hitherto.

It would be presumptuous in me to dilate at length upon the beauties of the piece. I will confine myself to stating that the first act went off satisfactorily. How could it be otherwise with people who had paid heavily for the privilege of witnessing the performance, and who wanted, by "making-believe" very hard, like Dicken's Marchioness with the orange peel, to persuade themselves they had a fair return for their money. It had been rumored about, moreover, that the Emperor was a convert to Wagnerism; and the game of follow-my-leader is played elsewhere than at school. Justice requires me to state, however, that Mdle. Brandt was a most effective Brangäne, while Mdme. von Voggenhuber as Isolde, and Herr Niemann as Tristan, made love as warmly as the most uncompromising partisan of the Art-Future could possibly desire. But such erotic manifestations tax the artists' resources inconveniently. Though there was a wait of at least half-an-hour between the first and the second act, neither Isolde nor Tristan had sufficiently recovered from their previous amorous efforts to do as much as they might have done for the interminable love duet in the latter act. The public gave unmistakable signs of being bored, and well they might. The third act went off with somewhat more spirit; but, if you ask me whether I regard the performance as a thorough and genuine success, I answer unhesitatingly: I do not. It strikes me that very few, not Wagnerites, do so regard it.

Besides the artists already named, the cast included Herr Betz as König Marke, and Herr Schmitt as Kurvenal; but neither gentleman especially distinguished himself. The chorus was exceedingly shaky from time to time, though it has not very much to do. The orchestra, on the contrary, performed its arduous task with wonderful dash and correctness. At the fall of the curtain, we had applause, recalls, and "ovations" to all concerned. But, this notwithstanding, *Tristan und Isolde* is not a genuine triumph.

To prove that I am not alone in my opinion, I subjoin an article from the Berlin *Echo* of the 23rd March:—

"On the 20th March, Richard Wagner's musical drama of *Tristan und Isolde* was performed for the first time on the royal stage! This significant event compels us, at the last moment before going to press, to take up our pen—the pen which we would so willingly allow to remain quiet on the subject of a work which—nay, really and truly, dear reader, it is a difficult thing to guide the pen against the production of a man from whose head and heart there have sprung genial works, but whom we now behold, in a path far removed from that of human morality, and of Nature, employing the magic tones of music in the service of—grossness! Sublime Music, canst thou suffer that the emotions of love and affection, even of the most passionate kind, of a man for a woman, and of a woman for a man, of that affection which sinks deep into the purest depths of the human breast, and to cherish and develop which in all its purity are the tasks of all humanity—canst thou suffer love to be degraded by furiously bellowing the tones created for thy modest service, and that a degenerate screaming of human voices should convey to us the movements of the human heart? Canst thou suffer that, sprung from a fancy run wild, brainless words should be coupled with disorderly caricatures of thy otherwise so lovely strains? And when thy most favored servants, thy Glucks, Mozarts, Beethovens, Webers, and their splendid creations, their Iphigenias, Paminas, Leonoras, Agathas, and Euryanthes, are all incapable of resisting the tendency to what is common, that stream which is overwhelming thy kingdom, as well as other things, why dost thou not send us thy Messiah, that, with the vigorous words of truth he may purify the temple, and strew about more healthy seed! If, in the second act of this drama, *Tristan and Isolde*, during an entire hour, writhe here and there about the stage in the wild intoxication of love; if, like lunatics, they shriek forth the most meaningless and stupid verses, perfectly incomprehensible for a healthy brain, and gradually excite each other with an exaggerated amount of strength and effort; if, in the third act, the hero, *Tristan*, wounded to the death, flings himself here and there incessantly before our eyes upon a bear-skin; if, in addition to all this, an orchestra is let loose, which, beginning with low tone-distortions, keeps continually pulling itself together to indulge in the wildest tumult, that brays down everything else; if this heralds in the Drama of the Future, then, dear reader—then rejoice with us, for out of the dark night there will arise the bright light of day! One more victory like the present, and Wagner's belauded works of the Future will be inevitably swallowed up in the abyss of oblivion. It strikes us that the ruddy dawn of due appreciation is already approaching; that a slight twilight is making itself perceptible on the horizon of public opinion. Though the noise-seeking enthusiasts of the Wagnerian Muse took care there should be no want of the usual uproar, though many less interested persons, stunned by the surging waves of the orchestra, were carried away to applause, the calm observer could easily perceive that the largest and best portion of the public were undecieved, as they rose from their seats, and, with sobered feelings, turned their backs on the work they had just heard. There is not the slightest doubt that, after some few representations, *Tristan und Isolde* will undergo the well-merited doom of never again awakening. So the only question remaining is to what end so much useless labor has been expended, and such an amount of artistic efforts sacrificed. This is a question which we shall endeavor to answer in a more comprehensive notice in our next number."

Referring to the production of *Tristan und Isolde*, a correspondent of the *Daily News* says:—

"The dramatic effect of the work is exceedingly powerful; the music is Wagnerian. That is to say, the plot is skilful, and skilfully worked out, and the music is well adapted to illustrate, and even interpret the plot. No mistake is more commonly made than to speak of Wagner's music in an absolute sense. There is no such thing as Wagner's music, which is sometimes called the music of the future, but only Wagner's opera, which may or may not become the opera of the future. Wagner's 'theories' are not theories of music, but theories of the opera. Hence it is impossible to give a correct idea either of the text or of the music separately. The two are inter-dependent; they are so fused together in obedience to a philosophical principle,

that they must be studied, not simply together, but simultaneously. Every artist has a right to demand that his work be judged in relation to his object and principles, and no one has suffered more than Richard Wagner from violation of this right. Let me illustrate by this very opera. In the clandestine meeting in the garden between *Tristan* and *Isolde* there is a prolonged duet. To many it doubtless seemed an interminable duet. It was a development of Schopenhauer's theory of love, which seems to be some mysterious reconciliation of eternal separation with eternal union. It took the two nearly three quarters of an hour of hard singing to work out the problem. Now, if any portions of this music were rendered alone instrumentally, they would perhaps seem to be an unmelodious jargon. But music, and text, and subject, and surroundings are all harmonious in the opera, and bound together by a philosophical principle of unity. Unless a man can think himself into this principle, or realize it to his mind as applied on the stage, he has no right to criticize Wagner. It would be as absurd for a Frenchman to pronounce Hegel's philosophy false, because to him it was unintelligible. There are men who do understand Hegel, and to them his philosophy is the spring of all intellectual progress."

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Daily Telegraph* gives a very amusing, though occasionally flippant description of *Tristan and Isolde* as performed in Berlin. The following are some of his general remarks:

"In *Tristan and Isolde*, Mr. Wagner has achieved one of the most amazing feats ever attempted by a musical composer—he has produced an opera over four hours in length, which does not contain a single melody of any description whatsoever. There is not an eight-bar tune in any part of the piece, orchestral or vocal. None of this gentleman's works can be truthfully said to overflow with easy melodies—with the sort of tunes that a person endowed with a quick musical ear can pensively whistle as he strolls home from the theatre, or pick out on the pianoforte-keys after having once heard them. Leaving, however, *Rienzi*, *Tannhäuser*, and *Lohengrin* out of the question, in which numbers that are quite unmistakably songs may be found upon rigorous search, I will merely observe that, compared to *Tristan and Isolde*, the *Flying Dutchman* is a veritable Little Warbler, and the *Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, a choice selection of negro melodies. One phrase, composed of enharmonic modulations, arrived at by semitonic extension at both ends of the initial chord, pervades the whole opera in an inexpressibly tiresome manner. It is intended to be typical of the *Liebestrank* or *Elixir d'Amor*—how better an apothecary's mixture compared to Donizetti's sparkling potion!—upon which the chief dramatic incident of the play turns, and the audience is pitilessly constrained to drink of it, figuratively speaking, until the hardest stomach turns and the most Spartan endurance breaks miserably down. The opera is one long dose of this sickly cordial, doled out by Mr. Wagner *ad nauseam* in countless spoonfuls. Not only is this crushing performance remarkable in the respect that its author has developed an almost superhuman ingenuity in keeping it void of melody, but in the still more surprising peculiarity that its orchestral accompaniments are contrived to bear such relation to the vocal parts that the audience can never be sure whether or no the singer be emitting the note written for him or her, as the case may be—an arrangement which is not without considerable negative advantages to an executive personnel, any member of which, with one conspicuous exception, is constitutionally incapable of singing the simplest music in tune, as is the case in the *corps d'artistes* to whose discordant utterances I had the misfortune of listening yesterday evening. The harmonies of *Tristan and Isolde* are prepared and resolved in such sort that you never know where to have them, and are alternately suspended upon tenterhooks of anticipation—tenterhooks forged out of your musical experiences and reasonings—and hurled into abysses of disappointment. The tricks—some of them diabolically malignant—thus played with the voices and instruments of the executors and with the ears of the listeners are innumerable, and display a weird cleverness on the part of their inventor. There is not an instant's repose in *Tristan and Isolde*, save between the acts; the tension of the oral nerves is unremitted—nothing comes off as it might be expected to "eventuate"—all is confusion, accidentals,

diminished sevenths, minor resolutions when major ones seem to be foregone conclusions and *vice versa*, horrid discords, false concords, moanings, gruntings, and yells—a very Pandemonium of sound."

The letter concludes thus:—

"It must not be inferred from the tone or substance of the foregoing letter that I undervalue Mr. Wagner's merits as a musician and a poet, or that I am prejudiced against his compositions in either branch of art. I went to hear *Tristan and Isolde*, sincerely hoping and, I may say, over-confidently expecting, to derive extreme gratification from listening to the ripe work of a great master—for such is, or was, Richard Wagner, most unquestionably. I came away from the theatre bitterly disappointed, having undergone real suffering where I anticipated keen delight. The truth is that *Tristan and Isolde* is as bad a work as *Lohengrin* is a good one—radically bad, vicious, unrighteous, without a redeeming feature of any genuine significance. In it every canon of musical art is violated—above all, that crowning one which decrees that music shall be beautiful *avant tout*. Its very skeleton is at once monstrous and deformed, and the outer case in which the bones are enwrapped is full of subtle diseases, and defaced by every imaginable blotch, stain, and excrescence. It is a circumstance to be mourned by every true musician that the author of so noble a production as the *Fliegende Holländer* should have inflicted such an insult upon the divine art as *Tristan and Isolde*."

NOTICING Ferdinand Hiller's comparison of Wagner and Napoleon III., the *Pall Mall Gazette* observes:—

"Is there not, again, something Napoleonic—as the word was used up to the year 1849—in Herr Wagner's compelling the musicians and musical amateurs of Europe to take tickets for his Baireuth performances at the rate of £45 for the entire series, or £15 for a series of four? In economical Germany £15 is a good deal of money to lay out on four days' operatic representations; and £45 is more than it would cost a rich amateur to go to the opera every night for a year. When Balzac, in inflated moments, called himself the 'Napoleon of the pen,' it is not quite clear what he meant. But it is certain that Balzac once conceived, more as a dream than as a reality, the notion of having his own drama of *Vautrin* played before such an audience as Napoleon I. assembled at Erfurt, and as Herr Wagner will bring together—for the first time since Erfurt—at Baireuth. Napoleon I., at his great theatrical festival, is said to have had 'a parterre of Kings,' which seems improbable, since, if all the Kings had been placed in the pit, there would have been no Royal personages worthy of the position to occupy the dress-circle—supposing the private boxes to have been reserved exclusively for the Emperors and their suites. Herr Wagner expects not a royal and military, but a royal and musical audience to hear his trilogy; and the Generals of Erfurt will be replaced at Baireuth by eminent composers and distinguished *virtuosi*. Those strangely constituted persons who, like Ferdinand Hiller, derive little or no pleasure from Wagner's music say that it is not as an operatic composer nor as a theatrical manager, but as a manager of men, that he has succeeded in inducing so many of the great personages of the earth to promise their attendance next autumn at Baireuth. Such may be the case; but that is not the question. The question is whether the Baireuth gathering is worthy of being considered Napoleonic, as in the style of the first Napoleon, or only Napoleonic as in the style of the third."

Old Dance Forms.—Herr Pauer's Lecture on the Piano Music of Sebastian and Emanuel Bach.

[Reported in the *London Musical Standard*, April 1.]

HERR ERNST PAUER devoted his second lecture at the South Kensington Museum to "The Freer Style of Pianoforte Music as illustrated by the works of Sebastian and Emanuel Bach, and their now almost-forgotten contemporaries." The lecturer said:—

It will be remembered that we spoke in the first lecture of the different kinds of instruments, the Clavichord, Virginal, Spinnet, etc.; it is now necessary to glance at the different musical forms, Alle-

mande, Sarabande, Bourrée, Gigue, etc. Of the dance, nothing was retained but the characteristic expression, the time not being regulated by the dance. Great attention was bestowed on the working out; Counterpoint was used for the part writing, the Double Equirration was added to give brilliancy; and the Suite was thus installed as expensive of the dance. No composers brought this form to such perfection as Handel and Bach; they understood how to preserve the characteristic expression of Allemande, Bourrée, Chaconne, Courante, Gigue, Hornpipe, Passepied, Polonaise, Minuet, Sarabande, etc. The characteristic expression of these forms will be perceived more completely by arranging them under the measures 3-4, 6-8, and Common Time. In 3-4 time are the slower forms: the Sarabande, Chaconne, Courante, Minuet, and Polonaise; in 6-8 time are the Siciliano and Gigue, which resembles the modern Tarentelle, and the Saltarello; the Gigue is written also in common time, but it is best in 6-8 time; it was first used in Ireland, and the melodies of that country still retain its characteristic expression; it is said also to have been played for rope dancing, which seems likely to be correct, in so far as the balance would be more easily maintained to a duple than a triple measure.

In Common Time are the Allemande, Bourrée, Hornpipe, Gigue, and Rigaudon. Bach, however, wrote the Bourrée, which is the same as the Hornpipe, in 3-4 time. A cursory glance at the old dance forms shows how important they were in Clavecin music; each had its charm, and by them composers learnt how to invent more fascinating tunes. We see then how important the people's music, the dance, was to instrumental music generally; and in this widening and consolidating of popular forms, we see, also, why music has such a great hold on the public, which is, because it keeps up a connection with the lowest ranks of society, and refines the popular airs and dance-tunes, thus attaining a popularity which painting and poetry could not have, although the latter can do a great deal in the form of popular songs. We may point out, *en passant*, the difference between the ecclesiastical and the simple forms; the former contains the suite, sonata, and any piece having three or four movements; the latter, any piece having a single movement only, as the nocturne and fantasia. The partita—a form used by Bach—was the same as the suite, being in several parts. In the toccata, as used in old music, from *toccare*, to touch, certain passages were repeated over and over, and in a freer style; the capriccio has now taken its place. The *ricercata*, from *ricercare*, to seek, was like a prelude, preparing the hearer for the principal piece; another explanation of it is that it is an art-fugue containing all sorts of contrapuntal devices. Fugue, from *fuga*, flight, is a composition in the strictest style, in which a subject is introduced by one part, and repeated by the others according to fixed laws. Symphony was not used for such forms as Haydn and Beethoven wrote, but was an overture or anything coming before the aria. In all Italian operas in which there was no overture, a *sinfonia* was written by the old composers. We see that the sonata is an abridgment of the suite, which first contained an allemande, courante, sarabande, gavotte or bourrée, fugue and gigue. Scarlatti, Couperin, and Rameau showed how these forms could be used, Bach perfected and idealized them. The peculiar strength of Bach consists in the suffusion of intellectual force, and an amalgamation of the profoundest science with the most charming and refined art, which was hitherto unknown. It is acknowledged that he owed much of this power to his severe study of contemporary composers. The works of Scarlatti, Couperin, and Rameau were then very difficult to procure, but his energy of will overcame all obstacles. He perused Italian and French works, not copying their form, but penetrating into their intellect and spirit; and now, after 127 years, his fugues and suites have the same charm as when the venerable master first put them on paper. The first stage of Clavecin literature thus came to a triumphal conclusion with Bach, who gave it the last finishing touch. The smaller forms were rendered so perfect as to become models. Our admiration and interest in Bach is not therefore merely historical, but excited by the beauties of his style, which we do not find antiquated. He was so thorough an expression of the spirit of his times, that in playing his compositions we are transported one hundred and twenty years back, forget our modern feelings, and what we call *rococo* in others, we never feel with him. He worked out his figures with more logic than others, gave them greater significance and a higher meaning, which resulted from his pow-

er of intellect; and we find in him a link with the present, for although we have attained to a richer expression and have better instruments, no progress in harmonization has been made since Bach. It is no exaggeration to say that in his works may be found every chord and harmony used by composers after him; and we may go so far as to maintain that the modern composers, such as Brahms, adopt the system of Bach, and in listening to their music we feel nearer to that of the old composers, than when we hear Beethoven, Weber, or Schubert. With Scarlatti and Couperin we feel at once that it is old music; it sounds strange, cold, and old-fashioned, and excites curiosity rather than sympathy; the heart is not warmed by it. Bach is also popular as being one of the main sources of pianoforte playing and practice for all who would become efficient executants. It may be said that through the mastery which Bach attained, it is to him that we owe the initiative to the free style and the consolidation of rules. Although the basis of the free style rests in scientific treatment, still there were boundaries that prevented a free treatment. All was objective or outward; the form was still supreme, and kept intact with almost religious care. Bach's works, in the order of their difficulty, would be, beginning with the easy, the duets, inventions, symphonies, six French suites, six English suites, six partitas, which may be played with real pleasure, the toccatas, which are interesting, the concertos, the chromatic fantasia; a mine of noble harmonies; and the "Wohltemperirte Clavier," the forty-eight preludes and fugues, which are a monument of the highest art. "Wohltemperirte" means well-tuned. Before Bach, tuning was not sufficiently advanced to enable the performer to play in all the keys; and Bach, who not only had genius, but also mechanical skill, found out how to perpetuate his achievement when he wrote his "Wohltemperirte Clavier," which is, indeed, not only a monument of art, but a triumph of human intellect, a veritable book of wisdom.

As specimens of the great Sebastian Bach, Herr Pauer played: Inventiones Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4; Suite Anglaise, No. 2, in D minor; Prelude and Fugue in C sharp major, from the first book; and Air and Gavotte in D major. The lecturer continued:—

Before passing to Emanuel Bach we must mention Friedemann Bach (1713-1780), some of whose Polonaises anticipate that romantic feeling which played so important a part in the later Clavecin literature. He was rather a dissipated man, and either too careless or too idle to write his compositions, so that we have only fifteen or eighteen preserved. The Polonaises are the most finished, and deserve to be well-known; they are, of course, not like the modern ones, but when we think how old they are, we find them astonishingly full of sweet harmony.

The lecturer having played two of Friedemann Bach's Polonaises, continued: Emanuel Bach, the second son of Sebastian, declared that German music was especially adapted to unite the qualities of the French and Italian styles. He was more a man of the world than his father, and anxious to regard all that was most pleasing. With all the difference between him and his father, we perceive the same order and clearness in the works of both, although in loftiness of ideas Sebastian was far superior. Although nearer to us in point of time, and, indeed, forming the connecting link between old and modern music, yet Emanuel Bach's music sounds more antique than that of his father. While Sebastian was a stranger to fashion, Emanuel was much influenced by the taste of his time, and showed a desire for ornament and elegance which, compared with the dignity of his father's style, appears of less importance. Emanuel was more honored by his public, than Sebastian was by his; his music was more easy, but it is undeniable that Sebastian will always stand higher than his gifted son. Emanuel rendered important service in introducing a freer and more independent style, and endeavoring to sing on the instrument; he possessed refinement, elegance, and pleasantness, rather than grandeur. He largely developed the sonata form, and was the predecessor of Haydn. Another of his merits is his essay, "Die wahre Kunst Clavier zu spielen," published in 1753, which Haydn declared to be the school of schools, and from which Clementi said that he had formed his style of playing. Its merit lies in subjecting practical playing to a strict analysis.

As an illustration, Herr Pauer played Emanuel Bach's concerto in A major, from the first set for connoisseurs. Before concluding, said the lecturer,

er, it will be well to summarize what has been said:—

Sebastian Bach consolidated the forms then in fashion, rounded and improved the Suite, containing all the dances then in fashion, and for a similar application of science in the pleasantest forms we seek in vain among his contemporaries. In harmonization we have not made much progress since his time; but we have improved in melody. Bach's melodies have a certain modesty, they lack boldness and nervous force; nor is this any reproach to him, but a result of the insufficiency of his means, and it is a sign of genius that he could write such works for such instruments. He excelled especially in sacred compositions. He concludes the first period of Clavecin literature. Emanuel Bach consulted the public taste more, and wrote in a lighter style. He developed the Sonata form, and gave the first indications of that lyrical style which made Haydn and Mozart so charming. A transformation was effected; the scholastic style disappeared before a more natural one, which with Haydn and Mozart attained greater importance, Emanuel's form becoming rounder and more plastic. The latter used the pianoforte, and from this capacity of the instrument for loud and soft playing resulted in part the difference between Sebastian and Emanuel. To complete the subject, the contemporaries of these composers should be mentioned; among these were Francesco Durante, Baldassaro Galuppi, Padre G. B. Martini and Domenico Paradisi in Italy, Schubert in France, and Graun in Germany.

Herr Paner concluded his interesting address by playing, as specimens of these composers: Studio in A, by Durante; Sonata in D major, by Galuppi; Gavotte and Ballet by Father Martini; Sonata, by Paradisi; and Minuetto and Allegro molto, by Schubert.

Prof. Paine's Symphony.

[From the New York Nation.]

The symphony is, indeed, one which well repays careful study. For while it cannot be said to indicate a "new departure" in the art of symphonic writing, it illustrates forcibly how much can be achieved without overstraining the mould elaborated by Beethoven for this form of music. It serves to support the opinion of those who hold that in many respects the extravagances of modern instrumental music are due to insufficient mastery of the technique of contrapuntal and thematic treatment. For want of skill in the use of the legitimate means of developing a fundamental melody, modern composers have too often resorted to the excessive multiplication of themes, or to ill-organized modulations, or to sensuous effects of rhythm or of instrumentation, surprising for the moment, but in the long run tedious and unsatisfactory. Schubert and Schumann, and among second-rate composers Liszt, are all in some degree amenable to this criticism; while Mendelssohn, on the other hand—the one modern symphonist who in mastery of form rivals the older masters—with all his Virgilian elegance and majesty, is lacking in the deeper emotional qualities to which Mozart and Beethoven gave expression. Hence the inference has been frequently drawn that further progress in the path marked out by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven is impracticable, and that the greatest wealth of musical expressiveness can only be attained at the present day by partially or wholly discarding the strict sonata-form in which these masters developed their greatest thoughts. Without seeking to decide so far-reaching a question, we think one may safely cite Mr. Paine's symphony as valuable testimony to the unsoundness of this inference. Mr. Paine's easy mastery of the whole technique of musical form is so conspicuous that no competent listener can fail to be struck with it. As a contrapuntist he has few rivals, and of the various resources of thematic development he has acquired such thorough control that the art is ever concealed by its own perfection. A musical critic will soon be struck with this on studying the score of the first movement of this new symphony or of some of the principal choruses in "St. Peter." The listening public, which does not understand the technical secret of such effects, will still recognize the masterly comprehension which foresees the end from the beginning, which never gropes or fumbles for a decisive chord or leading turn of melody, but promptly strikes it as if its position were fore-ordained and could admit of no doubt or misgiving. This mastery of form is still further exemplified in the clearness with which the musical themes assert themselves amid the sweeping current of subordinate sounds, so that they are easily carried away from a concert-room and dwelt upon in memory. A thor-

ough master of form never loses sight of the fact that the most complicated symphony is but a highly-developed song, and this fact Mr. Paine has not lost sight of.

Now, along with this formal power, which enables the composer to make two or three bright phrases tell a long and consistent musical story, we think it may be fairly conceded that the new symphony shows marked originality in invention of themes. It is not easy to decide such a point upon technical considerations, but every one accustomed to hearing music knows the characteristic turns of melody which distinguish the works of original composers—the ear-marks, as it were, by which their style of thought is betrayed. One would no more hesitate between the melodic phrases of Chopin and Mendelssohn than between the literary phrases of Carlyle and Macaulay. In this respect, if Mr. Paine sometimes recalls to us the tones of Bach and again of Schumann, yet on the whole there is a freshness and novelty about his themes which awakens interest, while it is saved from provoking us by the formal skill which elucidates each motive, until on its final recurrence it compels our assent and causes all our mind and heart to go along with it.

Such an interesting combination of melodic fertility with classical form should be enough to make us reconsider some of the questions which there has lately been a disposition to let go by default. Such a work as Mr. Paine's symphony is in itself a protest against the inferences which might be too hastily drawn from the recent prevalence of compositions in the various styles of Raff, Rubinstein, and Liszt. Indirectly, it is a protest against unreserved acquiescence in the methods of composition of which Wagner is the great representative; although, with its close adherence to classical form, Mr. Paine has drawn upon modern sensuous resources of instrumentation to no less an extent than Wagner, and in so doing the sympathetic skill with which he has considered the idiosyncrasies of every instrument is by no means the least of his merits. Both in melodic development and in orchestration the significance of Mr. Paine's work lies in its attempt to attain originality of musical expression without deserting classical form, and by its success in this will its permanent value be estimated. For the present, we think its favorable reception augurs well for the success of future attempts which, with wider experience and in yet bolder mood, its composer is likely to make in this direction.

Joachim and his Detractors at Berlin.

The High School for Music, which, in connection with the Royal Academy of Arts, can, under Joachim's admirable management, boast of continuous success, has, for a considerable period, been the object of attacks as unwarranted by fact as they are spiteful. These attacks have found characteristic utterance in a small publication, which has recently appeared, from the pen of a Herr August Reissmann, of Berlin. The said publication, both as regards form and contents, can be designated only as a pamphlet. The author (who makes no secret of the fact that the appointment of artists, not natives of Prussia, to the High School, very sensibly wounds his strongly developed local patriotism) discloses, in a strikingly partial tone, the work done by Joachim and the masters under him; overwhelms other artists, nearly related intellectually to the master, with unjustifiable invectives, and, finally, allows himself to be carried so far by his blind zeal as to call the attention of the Lower House to the alleged abuses in the Royal High School. With regard to the value and the justice of these attacks, especially in so far as they are directed against Joachim personally, the Chamber of Deputies fully enlightened the general public at the sitting of the 16th March. During the consideration of the several items in the estimates of Public Worship and Education, the subject was brought under discussion. An honorable member, Dr. Loewe [Calbe], who began by stating that he regarded as well-founded some of the complaints against the institution, took Joachim's part in the most energetic manner. He said that: "The persons who made the complaints had injured their cause extremely by giving the complaints so personal a character, and, more particularly, by directing them against the Director of the High School for Music individually, an artist of the first rank, whose genuine artistic disposition is proved most strikingly by the fact that, as executant, he presents the public with the masterpieces of our classical period in the best way—a perfect manner; doing so with rare self-abnegation, for he does not exhibit the pretension of other executants, who come before the public merely to shine by means of their technical skill, their dexterity, or their own compositions."

Immediately afterwards, Dr. Schöne, Government Commissary and Privy Councillor, spoke as follows:—"The honorable member who has just sat down informed

us that he wished and expected the Government to state what was their position with regard to the very violent attacks of which the Academy of Art, and especially the High School for Music, had been the objects. Gentlemen, the Government really desires nothing better than to do so; not, however, on the ground that they consider it their duty to act as the representatives of literary productions, for the discussion of which this is not the place, but because they hold themselves justified in declaring that, in the present and in all similar instances, they have adhered to the principle, which will certainly meet with the approbation of this honorable House, of conscientiously investigating every criticism, no matter how bitter and inimical it might be, directed against any matter and its requirements, and of appropriating and turning to account whatever in such a criticism was justified by the fact; but attacks which have nothing to do with fact nor with truth, and which bear the stamp of *impure motives upon their front*, such attacks, gentlemen, it is our principle simply to despise."

Thus have been repulsed the attacks against one of our best and most disinterested artists, who, to the glory of German art, has, in so short a time, raised the Music School of the capital to a most flourishing condition. The blow intended for Joachim has recoiled with double force upon him who aimed it.—*German Paper.*

Handel's Oratorio, 'Susanna.'

M. Schœlcher, in his Life of Handel, records that the oratorio 'Susanna' was composed when Handel was sixty-three years old, and was written between the 11th of July and the 12th of August, 1748, having followed 'Solomon,' which was composed in the same year, between the 5th of May and the 19th of June. Both works were performed at Covent Garden Theatre during the season of 1749, and such was the popularity of 'Susanna' that it was given the same number of times as 'Samson' and the 'Messiah' that is, four times, whereas 'Solomon' and 'Hercules' were only performed twice. 'Susanna' was revived with new additions and alterations, at Covent Garden on the 9th, 14th, 16th, and 21st of March, 1759—a year to be remembered, for on the 6th of April the 'Messiah' was given under Handel's direction, for the last time. And everybody knows he died on Good Friday, the 13th of April following. The only other reference to 'Susanna' in M. Schœlcher's book is this: "The couplets in 'Susanna,' 'Ask if yon damask Rose,' were worth a fortune. They were engraved in every form. The Lady's Magazine gave them to its subscribers even as late as 1793. They were sung with other words, 'Let rakes and libertines,' in 'Love in a Village,' a comic opera, produced in 1762." Now this transfer of one of the principal airs in 'Susanna,' that sung by her attendant in the second part, when the former is sighing for the return of her "dearest youth, Joachim," from a sacred to a secular work is indicative of the nature of the book, as well as of the style of the music. 'Susanna' is no more an oratorio than 'Acis and Galatea'; it is essentially a serious opera; there are no antagonistic elements of sects and believers to call forth the composer's powers of contrast. 'Susanna' is a stage story of a girl persecuted by two villains, whose titles are those of 'Elders'; Joachim, her husband, is the tender alto; Chelcias is the fond father of the heroine, who has a faithful friend in the attendant, who has been crossed in love; Daniel is the righteous and sagacious judge, who cleverly cross-examines the two prosecutors, and convicts them of perjury, and thus the dénouement is reached, with the voices of the people, who have acted throughout the work as a Greek chorus, singing—

A virtuous wife shall soften fortune's frown,
She's far more precious than a golden crown.

Instead of being sung in the concert-hall, 'Susanna' should be acted and sung in the theatre of the Alexandra Palace with a *mise en scène*, the words, of course, being modified and brought within the approval of our dramatic censor, for it seems as if situations and dialogue will pass muster in an oratorio which would not be permitted in an opera.

Setting aside, however, the consideration of the drama and poetry of 'Susanna,' unqualified admiration must be expressed for the dramatic attributes displayed by the composer in setting the story; the most remarkable skill is exhibited in individualizing the characters, each one having musically a special physiognomy, so to speak,—hence the marked contrast in the music allotted to the first Elder (the tenor) and to the second Elder (the bass), the former sly and insinuating, the latter reckless and fiery. Susanna's strains have a type of their own, affect-

tionate, devotional, resigned in sorrow, and joyful when truth triumphs. Chelsias and Joachim have distinctive settings; but it may be presumed that in assigning Daniel to a soprano Handel had in view a singer of the period. This distinction in the parts the composer strongly manifests in the air of lament of the attendant, "Beneath the cypress' gloomy shade." As for the great air of 'Susanna,' "If guiltless blood be your intent," from the days of Handel it has been the *cheval de bataille* of our leading sopranos at musical festivals and concerts; it requires power and pathos of the highest dramatic order of expression. In no other oratorio is Handel greater in his solos than in 'Susanna.' It may be as well to quote the two bass airs, forcibly sung by Signor Foll, "The oak that for a thousand years" and the "Torrent that sweeps," with its orchestral undercurrent; the airs for the tenor, nicely sung by Mr. Shakespeare, "Ye verdant hills" and "Blossoming as the face of spring;" the three airs of the contralto (Joachim), excellently delivered by Miss Julia Elton, "Clouds overtake the brightest," "On the rapid whirlwind's wing" (finely scored), and the gem "Gold within the furnace tried" (encored). The three soprano parts were steadily sung by Miss Anna Williams (Susanna), Miss Marie Arthur, who doubled the Attendant and David. The choruses have not the breadth and grandeur which Handel has displayed in his other works; they are few and far between—all in four parts, the best of which are the "How long, O Lord," "Righteous Heaven," in the first part, the "O Joachim, thy wedded truth," ending the second section; but nothing can approach in impetuosity and exciting interest the opening chorus of the third part, "The cause is decided,"—it is a graphic picture of a mass of people exclaiming, in alternate passages, that "the cause is decided, and the sentence decreed." The trio, "Away, away, ye tempt me both in vain," by Susanna and the two Elders, would tell powerfully on the stage.

As the score stands originally, its performance would have occupied over four hours; but it has been prudently reduced by some twenty numbers, and, even with this shortening, the recitatives are too long and tedious; the judicious accompaniment on the organ by Mr. F. Archer contrasted advantageously with the monotonous chords of the violoncello and double bass usually employed. Mr. H. Weist Hill conducted with tact and discretion, and kept the orchestra well subdued in sustaining the soloists. The additional accompaniments have been made by M. Halberstadt, whose only fault is that he has been much too abstemious, as the songs were susceptible of more free use of the wind band than he has employed. No apology was required of the conductor for the extra accompaniments, added by M. Halberstadt; but Mr. Hill might have requested indulgence from the hearers of 'Susanna' for inflicting on them a dull and dreary analysis of the music, the only relief to it being the introductory facts as to Handel's career, taken from M. Schöcher's valuable work without acknowledgment, while credit is given to Dr. Chrysander, who had Handel's MSS. from the former, for some particulars as to the "cuts."

Whatever may be the ultimate position taken by these Handelian revivals at the Alexandra Palace, professors and amateurs must be grateful to the directors for the production of works so long ignored: the mine is rich enough to warrant further exploration.—*Athenæum*, April 8.

NEW LIFE OF HAYDN. The London *Athenæum* says:—

The 144th anniversary of the birth of Joseph Francis Haydn, affectionately called Papa Haydn, was celebrated last night (March 31st) in Exeter Hall by the Sacred Harmonic Society. Sir Michael Costa was the conductor, and Miss Blanche Lucas, Mr. Cummings, and Signor Foll the principal solo singers of the masterpiece by Haydn—his oratorio, 'The Creation.' We gladly avail ourselves of this celebration to draw the attention of the musical world to the biography, now in progress, of the composer, by Herr Pohl, the first volume of which has been published in Berlin. In this work, Herr Pohl bids fair to produce an account of Haydn's career as exhaustive as Herr Philipp Spitta's 'Johann Sebastian Bach.' These two biographies will, it is to be hoped, be translated into English. We do not propose to notice specially Herr Pohl's opening volume,—it will be better to wait for the work in its entirety; but there has not been, as yet, a complete memoir of Haydn. The notices of J. S. Mayer, A. C. Dies, G. A. Griesinger, J. F. Arnold, N. E. Framery, J. Lebreton, and J. F. Linker, which appeared in 1800-10, were published too soon after the death of Haydn to enable the authors to search for au-

thentic details; while the subsequent books of Carpani, Bayle, and Grosser contained little fresh information. The articles in the musical dictionaries have been necessarily brief. Haydn's life was not an eventful one, although it extended from 1732 to 1809: his two oratorios, 'The Creation' and 'The Seasons,' were written after he had reached his sixtieth year. Next to his early struggles in Vienna, and his having the Esterhazys as his patrons, it will be Haydn's visit to London in 1791 which will prove of paramount interest to readers in this country. But, setting aside the particulars of Haydn's everyday life, Herr Pohl has prodigious labor before him, as he must pass in review four oratorios, operas (19), symphonies (nearly 125), masses, 'Stabat Mater,' 'Te Deum,' offertoriums, motets (34), quartets (83), sonatas (44), cantatas, dance-music, fantasias for divers instruments;—in short, without anticipating the correct numbers which Herr Pohl will eventually supply, there will be over 800 compositions to comprehend in the thematic chronological catalogue which the biographer proposes to supply.

No wonder Herr Pohl, indefatigably industrious as he is, feels dismay at the labor before him. Haydn was a creative genius—a reformer and an originator; he was the pioneer for the creations of Mozart, Beethoven, Spohr, Mendelssohn, etc. It has been affirmed that there is not a point in modern orchestration the germ of which cannot be traced to Haydn; and yet his inventions, his innovations, and his novelties have the type of such a seeming simplicity, his style being so clear and lucid. One striking proof of the vitality of Haydn's music is that, whether in a programme of chamber compositions or in a scheme of orchestral works, no matter where a quartet or a symphony be placed in rotation, not even the inspirations of a Beethoven can militate against the impression produced on any auditory by the melodious strains of Haydn, which remain an everlasting protest against ugliness and absence of tune. Fétis, in his 'Biographie Universelle des Musiciens,' has, in a few words, justly described the genius of Haydn:—"Compositeur illustre, dont le nom réveillera toujours le souvenir de la perfection dans toutes les parties de l'art qu'il a cultivé. Grand homme qui figure dans l'histoire de cet art comme le type impérissable d'un ordre de beautés régulières, pures et brillantes, admirables produits des plus admirables proportions dont le développement de la pensée artistique soit susceptible!"

Wagner's Centennial March.

The manuscript of the \$5,000 march, written for the Centennial celebration, by Richard Wagner, consists of 33 closely written pages, and is all in the composer's own hand. A more beautiful musical autograph is rarely seen. Every note is as clear and elegant and symmetrical as print. The characters are fine, but distinct and regular, and the expression marks are made with extreme care. The mere manual labor of transcribing such a score must have filled seven or eight long days of steady application. The title runs:

Grand Festival March, for the opening of the Centennial commemorative of the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America. Composed and dedicated to the Women's Centennial Committees by Richard Wagner.

At the head of the score are placed, as a motto, the following lines of Goethe:

"Nur der verdient sich Freiheit wie das Leben
Der täglich sie erobern muss."

(He only earns the right to freedom and to life
Who daily is compelled to conquer them.)

The scoring is extremely massive, as might have been expected from Wagner on such an occasion. Besides the usual stringed instruments, the music calls for three flutes (one of which alternates with the piccolo), three hautboys, three clarinets, three bassoons, one contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, one bass trumpet, three trombones, one bass tuba, three kettle drums, great and military drums, cymbals, gong and triangle. The demand for a bass trumpet is singular, for the instrument is practically obsolete—unless it may have been recently revived in Germany—and a substitute may readily be found for it. A recent telegram from Europe stated that artillery, etc., had been introduced in the finale; it is hardly necessary to say that the report is entirely untrue. Although the March abounds in striking effects, they are obtained only by musical means.

Wagner adds to the score the following note: "The proper tempo is to be governed by the triplet which, employed throughout thematically, is always to be executed with marked accent, and consequently must never be hurried." It is this triplet which characterizes the whole March and gives it an individuality quite its own.

The key is in G major. The opening is bold, announcing the thematic triplet (which is to play such an important role in the work) with the full force of the orchestra.

The themes he has selected for mutual contrast on the one hand and for novel effects in combination on the other, are the first theme and the Fanfare. As this proceeds, the original triplet-motive begins to assert itself more and more, gradually leading back to a recapitula-

tion of the opening subject. Musical examples would be of no avail here to illustrate the treatment which the various motives receive at Wagner's hands. The effects are produced by the *interweaving* of subjects, rather than by the individual character of the subjects themselves. Judged from this point of view, the work is a masterpiece. To the recapitulation, above referred to, a broad and fiery coda is appended, made almost exclusively from the original "thematic-triplet," and bringing the work to a brilliant and satisfactory close.

The full score will not be published here, and Herr Wagner has agreed that it shall not appear in Europe for at least six months after its performance in Philadelphia. Mr. Thomas, however, is making a piano-forte arrangement which will be copy-righted. The March, of course, will not be played by the orchestra until the 10th of May. It will not even be rehearsed until after the band is collected and settled in Philadelphia.—*Bulletin*, [Philadelphia.]

Music Abroad.

LEIPZIG. Verdi in the Gewandhaus! Verdi's *Requiem* was given twice there, in the 19th and 20th concerts of the regular subscription series. On the first occasion, we read, there was an immense attendance, and although opinions differed as to the merits of the composition, the applauders formed a decided majority. On the second, the hall was half empty. Mme. Peschka-Leutner was the principal soprano.

WIESBADEN. A striking proof of the admirable performances here is the fact that, for instance, Schumann's *Genoveva* (produced in February, 1874) has been, up to the present moment, performed twenty-one times before houses invariably crowded; that operas like *Euryanthe* have for years been great attractions, and that Wagner's operas (with scarcely any cuts) are, according to the opinion of the local and other papers, given in an absolutely perfect manner. Last year, one hundred and twenty-four operas, by twenty-eight different composers, were performed. There were, also, six Symphony Concerts. Among the works played for the first time here were *Aida*, *Le Roi d'Yvetot*, *Melusine*, and *Manfred*, with Schumann's music. There were, likewise, a large number of revivals. Although the present year is not far advanced, the management—says the *Theaterbrief*—has already given two new works, Mozart's *Così fan Tutte* and Verdi's *Requiem*, besides twenty-four operas and two Symphony Concerts; and is preparing *Die Bürgermeisterwahl*, a new opera by Jean Grimm, and *Das goldene Kreuz*, by I. Brüll. Among the revivals will be Gluck's *Orpheus* and Lortzing's *Wildschütz* and *Opern-Probe*.

COLOGNE. Dr. Ferdinand Hiller has composed a new grand choral work, entitled *Prometheus*, which has been performed with great applause at the Gürzenich Concerts.

PARIS. At the Grand Opera they have been ringing the changes on the *Huguenots* and *Faust*; while at the Opéra-Comique there are no less than twelve standard works, continually varying the representations. The fact is that people are still not tired of gazing at the marvels of the colossal new building, and are yet to offer a fair judgment as to the operatic performances in the *salle*. The Parisians have built a theatre, about the splendor of which they are conceited; but, when surfeited with sight-seeing, another tale will have to be told, a more delicate task to achieve. Meanwhile we must wait and see what *Jeanne d'Arc* will do. The Choral Symphony of Beethoven was given at M. Pasdeloup's last concert.—*Graphic*.

London.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA. Mr. Gye's prospectus of arrangements for the season is issued without any comment whatever. He awaits public opinion, and forbears from extolling his own wares in advance. In this he shows wisdom, because public opinion is never, or, at least, very rarely, influenced by a preamble of official criticisms, in which everything is warranted good. Moreover, he has quite enough to rely upon in the exhaustive repertory he already commands—six operas by Meyerbeer, five by Rossini, seven by Donizetti, three by Bellini, seven by Verdi, one each by Flotow, Gomez, Poniatowski, Ricci, A. Thomas, Campana, Cimarosa, Weber, Beethoven, and Wagner, two by Gounod, four by Auber, and three by Mozart—48 in all. From these he intends to draw as expediency may suggest, and

there is small difficulty in guessing to which among them most frequent prominence will be awarded. Many amateurs, remembering the success of *Lohengrin* last summer, looked forward with eager expectancy to Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, and would have been disappointed had it not figured at least among the probabilities of the season. Poor *Tannhäuser*, which was promised before *Lohengrin*, has been rather shabbily treated. However, better late than never; *Tannhäuser* is the second in a list of four operas, "three of which at least" are to be given. The others are Verdi's *Aida*, (which, since its production by the Khedive in Cairo, at an enormous outlay, has been travelling over Europe, and even paid a visit to America), *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and *Mosè in Egitto*. *L'Elisir* can only be looked upon as a novelty, inasmuch as Mdle. Zare Thalberg is for the first time to essay the part of Adina. If *Tannhäuser* and *Aida* (which Mr. Gye claims the exclusive right of performing in England) are both given, it is to be feared there will be little chance for Rossini's *Mosè*, the production of which, in 1849, at the old theatre, under the direction of Sir Michael (then Mr.) Costa, is still remembered with satisfaction. It is, moreover, one of Rossini's grandest works. There is the more likelihood of *Tannhäuser* and *Aida*, seeing that Madame Adelina Patti is cast for the leading woman's part in one, and Mdle. Emma Albani enjoys a similar distinction in the other. If these two, or either of them, combined with *Mosè*, are forthcoming, there can be no valid cause for grumbling. To turn to the catalogue of engagements, we find eight new names—Milles, Rosavalle, Emma Abbott, Proch, and Eva de Synneberg; Signors Conti, Monti, Tamagno, and Gayarre. The four ladies are, we believe, sopranos; two of the gentlemen are tenors, and two of them basses. Mdle. Abbott, if we are rightly informed, has won some distinction in the United States; but about the other ladies, except Mdle. Proch (daughter of the popular composer of that name), knowing nothing, we can say nothing. The name of Signor Tamagno, first among the new tenors, has spread abroad; and Signor Gayarre is reported to have earned golden opinions at Milan and other Italian cities, where he seems to enjoy equal favor with the public and the press. It is, therefore, with some disappointment that we read in a foot note how, though pledged to Mr. Gye for several seasons, having previously contracted certain engagements abroad, the arrival of Signor Gayarre during the present year is "not certain." But the director has 15 tenors without him, and among these stand-conspicuous M. Capoul, the Frenchman, who won so much favor at Her Majesty's Opera a short time since; the rest including Signors Nicolini, Bolis, De Sanctis, Marini, and others whose names we need not cite. Among the baritones, besides M. Maurel, we find that old favorite Signor Graziani, Signor Cotogni, and Signor Medica (his first appearance)—only missing the honored name of M. Faure; while at the head of the basses are Signors Bagaglio, Capponi, Ciampi (*buffo*), and Tagliafico. Madame Patti, Mdle. Albani, Mdles. Marimon, D'Angeri, Smeroschi, and Scalchi will, as might have been expected, occupy their accustomed posts; but to go further into the list of "prima donnas," "contraltos," "compramis," etc., is out of the question.—*Times*.

CRYSTAL PALACE CONCERTS. The directors have fulfilled their promise of giving all the symphonies of Beethoven during the present series of concerts. The 9th, the great choral symphony, the *Colossus*, was produced on Saturday—*Finis coronat opus*. The difficult task of rendering the vocal solo parts was entrusted to Mdle. Johanna Levier, Miss Annie Butterworth, Mr. Edward Lloyd, and Signor Foli. The choruses, scarcely less difficult to master, were, of course, undertaken by the Crystal Palace choir, whose steady advance towards excellence has been the subject of general remark. How the orchestral movements are executed, under the direction of Mr. Manns, our readers need scarcely be told. Each time the Choral Symphony is heard at these concerts the better it is understood, and the firmer hold it takes. The programme also included an overture, *Euterpe* (not *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, as originally advertised), and two vocal pieces by the late C. E. Horsley. *Euterpe*, an "Ode to Music," was composed expressly for the Inauguration Festival, in 1870, of the Town Hall, Melbourne. Of the two vocal pieces referred to, one was a song, "The night shades gather," from *Euterpe*, the other a recitative and air from *Gideon*, last of three oratorios which Mr. Horsley composed, the other two being *David* and *Joseph*. But about *Euterpe* generally we shall have an opportunity of speaking when the

Ode is produced entire, which it is to be hoped may be not long hence. After songs from *Der Freischütz* and *Le Nozze* (Signor Foli and Mdle. Levier), the concert was brought to an end with the overture to *Guillaume Tell*.—*Musical World*.

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, APRIL 29, 1876.

The Oratorio Week.

Our old Handel and Haydn Society gave three notable performances on the evenings of Palm and Easter Sunday and the intervening Wednesday. The most important was that of

BACH'S PASSION MUSIC, according to the gospel of St. Matthew. This was the third time this wonderful work has been attempted in Boston or this country. The Society began with giving barely half of it in their triennial festival of 1871. At the following festival (1874) they filled an evening's programme with nearly two thirds of it, including for the first time the stupendous and immensely difficult opening Chorus, and deepened the impression which in many listeners was deep at first. This time the omissions were fewer, and yet they must have amounted to more than a fourth part of the work. The selections on the whole were more judicious, and in their connection more effective. The most important additions were a considerable number of those short, vindictive and excited choruses of Jews, taunting and clamoring for crucifixion, which, as representing that many-headed and many-voiced monster, the populace or mob, were formerly called *turbæ*. These are wonderfully constructed, double choruses, in eight real parts, with independent orchestral parts besides. They are sudden gusts, whirlwinds of harmony, gone in a moment, but their effect is marvellous, and they enliven the serious sentimental progress of the work with most vivid dramatic representations of the excited crowd. They are so quickly gone that the hearer has no time to consider the consummate art implied in the intricate yet clearly expressive polyphonic texture of each little piece; hours seem concentrated in an intense moment. Such are (all in the Second Part): "He guilty is of death;" "Tell us, thou Christ, who gave the blow;" "What is that to us?" "Let him be crucified;" "He saved others, himself he cannot save, etc.;" and the startling, appalling shout (diminished seventh chord) upon the word "Barabbas," in answer to the question: "Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you?" This chord was struck with surprising accuracy and unanimity by the whole chorus of five hundred, considering that they had no leading notes. And all these little choruses, requiring the utmost vigilance and self-possession for the attack, were given with spirit and precision, although with not quite the snap of the preceding evening's rehearsal in the smaller hall. The conductor (CARL ZERRAHN) had bestowed especial pains on them, impressing all the necessary cautions.—Nor should we omit to mention the curious little chorus, in the First Part, where the Twelve mingle their eager exclamations: "Lord, is it I? is it I?"

Several Arias and Recitatives, before omitted, enriched this performance, namely: for Soprano (No. 12), "Only bleed, thou dearest Heart;" the recitatives relating to Peter's denial; the Tenor recitative: "He will not speak; he heareth and is silent," but not the beautiful Aria which follows; "Geduld!" ("Behold how still, how calm!"); the Alto recitative: "Great Lord of heaven, here stands the blessed Saviour bound;" but not the Aria to which it leads; the Alto recitative: "Ah, Golgotha" (No. 69), and Aria (with ejaculations of cho-

rus): "Look where Jesus beckoning stands;" finally, that most beautiful Bass recitative: "At eventide, cool hour of rest," not, however, completed by the equally beautiful Aria; "Cleanse thee, O my soul."

On the other hand to make room for these fresh numbers, there were omitted; the Soprano Aria (19), "Never will my heart refuse thee;" the Bass Aria: "Come, blessed cross," with Rec. (65 and 66); several short pieces of the narrative Recitative, whose place was more than supplied by fresh ones; and, what is more important, several of the Chorals sung before. Indeed only four, out of the fifteen, were sung this time; this is to be regretted for the grand repose they bring at proper moments; their broad, rich, chaste harmonies are so tranquilizing, strengthening and uplifting to the soul. It is a kind of all-pervading harmony, which seems to flow in (as it were silently) on all sides, from around you and below, like a full tide, to buoy you up to higher life. The same remark may be made of some of the larger choruses, the opening one especially.—There still remain to be given, for the first time, besides some arias, recitatives and chorals, at least two of the most important numbers in the work, to-wit: the magnificent, long, profoundly solemn chorus (figured Choral) which forms the conclusion of the First Part: "O Man, bewail thy sins so great;" and the opening number of Part II, the Alto Aria, with Chorus: "Whither has thy friend departed?" which by its romantic, pastoral vein forms a fine contrast with the rest.—But it was impossible to give all in a single evening; as it was, it lasted very nearly three hours—hours of intense enjoyment to most of the vast audience apparently, if irksome more or less to not a few; for people differ in their natures and mental conditions, and it is simply a question of experience and time as to Bach's music; ask the singers, now that they have studied it and in a measure learned it, whether they find it dry or tedious! Certain it is, that that whole crowd, with very few exceptions, listened attentively until the last chord was sung. To give the Passion Music entire will require two performances, either in the morning and evening of a single day, like Good Friday, or on two successive evenings; and we have great hope that another year will bring us that.

Of the performance on the whole, considering all the circumstances, we can hardly say too much in praise. It was a great advance upon the previous renderings. Mr. Zerrahn covered himself with credit by the zeal, the energy, the judgment with which he had worked the whole matter up; the rehearsals had been urged through with great tact and efficiency, and he conducted as one who had come really to love and feel the music; there was genuine enthusiasm in it. The Choruses, almost without exception, were remarkably well sung. We have already spoken of the turbulent choruses of Jews; the short choruses of the disciples, in the First Part, also went well,—better than before; the Chorals so well that one only wanted more of them. The great double choruses, at the beginning and the end, and the exciting "Ye lightnings, ye thunders," made a profound impression. We have described them so fully on former occasions that we need add nothing here. In the sublime opening: "Come ye daughters," the questions and responses between first and second chorus were prompt and distinct, and the intermittent verses of the Choral "O Lamb of God," for the Soprano *ripieva*, rang out from the clear voices of some sixty boys in the gallery, supported by clarinet and cornet in unison, with telling power; the ensemble of all the voices and the instruments was overwhelming. We only question whether the movement both of this, and the concluding chorus: "Around thy tomb here sit we

weeping," was not taken a little too fast for the best effect; nor can we help still feeling that the latter is sung for the most part, particularly at the start, too loud to suit so tender a hymn of parting at the tomb; the words say: "murmur low in tones suppressed;"—not that it should be all too low, sunk to a whisper, to guard against which sentimental weakness we suppose to be the meaning of the *forte* sign at the beginning, and to leave a chance for *pianissimo* contrast at the words: "Rest thee softly, softly rest."

Also in the single (four-part) choruses the great mass of voices were beautifully blended and subdued to light and shade. We refer to those soft, refreshing Chorals, wonderfully harmonized, which ever and anon relieve the agonized Tenor recitative: "O grief," and the lovely Aria, with Oboe obligato. "So slumber shall our sins befall" comes in again and again, each time with a new harmony and an enhanced expression. And the short questions: "O where?" etc., which interrupt the Alto solo; "Look where Jesus beckoning stands;" and again: "My Jesu, good night," which forms the choral burden to the several sentences of Bass, Tenor, Alto and Soprano solo, near the end, ("The Lord hath lain him down to rest,")—were given with delicate precision.

Here we may as well speak of the instrumentation, which was that of Robert Franz, and in the rendering of which throughout, alike in the accompaniment of choruses and solos, our Boston orchestra won for itself sincere praise. It was a difficult and an unwonted task, and, under the circumstances, many must have been surprised at the zeal and readiness with which the musicians, who had but a single full rehearsal, seemed to take to it, and at the satisfactory manner in which it was accomplished. The solo instruments which are made *obligato* in several of the Arias the oboe (Mr. JASPER), the flute (Mr. GOKINS), and twice the violin (Mr. A. FRIZZ and Mr. MULLALLY),—were very nicely played. We do not say that there was no room for improvement, but we think we safely may point to this approach to excellence in the orchestral service of the Passion Music as one of the fruits of careful drill in the winter's Symphony concerts, and as an illustration of the importance of keeping such an orchestra together by giving it all possible employment upon these higher tasks.

The solos, of course, offer the greatest difficulties. They are all difficult to unaccustomed singers, though they be artists in more modern styles of music; and many of them are difficult to unaccustomed hearers. Our Bach culture is but half begun. The Bach melody is peculiar; one has to become gradually familiar with its forms and steeped in its spirit. It is too serious, too quiet, too sincere, too religiously musical and too musically religious, too devoid of modern effects, and it demands too tire a self-surrender of the singer, to make it readily appreciable to all, to any who have not something in their nature that draws them to it by innate affinity. Among our excellent vocalists hardly any have been nurtured upon Bach; those who have will never find in music more unflinching bread of life.—But this time the solo efforts were all creditable, some of them successful in a high degree. It seems a pity, while we have among us a singer who is so eminently in the best sense an artist and musician, and so at home in Bach as Miss Clara Doria (have we not recently had evidence?), that she should not have been called to take part in the performance. Miss BAKER had many qualifications for the Soprano portion, but not all. She has a clear, pure, evenly developed voice, a finished style of execution, and she had studied the music faithfully, approaching the task with reverence and no doubt with diffidence, and yet with courage and determination. It was a conscientious effort, and there can be no denying that she sang well. It is only that neither the character of voice, nor her previous musical atmosphere and culture were much in sympathy with Bach; the Bach feeling was not there. And yet there is much to be said in praise of the chaste style and discretion with which she sang the Air: "Only bleed;" and in the plaintive Duet

which precedes the outburst of the Lightning Chorals; and the exquisite Aria with the flute solo: "From love unbounded."

To MME. RUDENSDORFF were assigned the important Alto solos in the second part; and here we had an artist of long experience in the Bach school, as well as in all the great schools of vocal art; one who thoroughly knew and understood the music, and who came back to it with strong enthusiasm and with desire to signify her undiminished faith in it, with zeal to convert to it new listeners. Of course her rendering of the great Aria: "O pardon me, my God" (*Erbarne dich*), in spite of some unpleasant tones, was a fine lesson for our singers. There was perhaps some occasional exaggeration of the pathetic accent in the recitatives: "Here stands the blessed Saviour bound!" and "Ah, Golgotha!" but it was very grand, impressive declamation; and the Aria: "Look where Jesus beckoning stands" was most artistically given, with due tenderness and fervor.—The Alto solos in the first part were fairly sung by Mrs. LAURA HASTINGS GOODWIN, whose low tones are rich and large, but her delivery somewhat constrained and cold.

Mr. M. W. WHITNEY was unable, on account of hoarseness, to appear, which was a general disappointment. But all were surprised at the excellent manner in which Mr. J. F. RUDOLPHSEN, who took his place at a few hours notice, delivered the beautiful and holy recitative which falls to the part of Jesus. It was most creditable to his musicianship, his quick intelligence and taste. The other Bass solos (including the recitative of Peter and of the High Priest, the Aria (with Recitative:) "Gladly will I, all resigning," the Aria: "Give me back my dearest Master," and the beautiful Recitative: "At eventide," were sung by Mr. J. F. WINCH, all in his best voice, and in a tasteful, noble style. Bach evidently has begun to gain possession of him.—But the difficult task of all, and on the whole most laudable achievement, was that of Mr. WM. J. WINCH, who took upon him not only all the frequent and most trying recitative in the connecting narrative of the *Evangelist*, but all the Tenor solos that were sung besides,—a most exacting and exhaustive task. And on the whole he did it admirably, making slight modifications in now and then a high and fatiguing phrase of the recitative, but giving it for the most part with sweet, clear voice, and with distinct enunciation. In the solo with chorus: "I'll watch with my dear Jesu," his voice was sometimes so subdued at the re-entrance of the theme, that we could not hear it until he had been singing several measures: that was the only drawback to an otherwise artistic, pleasing, beautiful performance.—Mr. LANG presided ably at the Organ.

FAREWELL OF MME. TIETJENS. The great prima donna having expressed her wish to sing her farewell in this city, and with our oratorio Society, Boston was ready to avail herself of the honor, and it was arranged (at very short notice, with small chance for rehearsal between the *Passion Music* and *Joshua*) to give the "Hymn of Praise" and Rossini's *Stabat Mater* on Wednesday evening, April 12. The Music Hall was crammed, and the reception of the noble singer was most cordial. In the necessary absence of Mr. ZERRAHN, Mr. LANG conducted. It was difficult on a theatre night to collect all the desirable musicians for an orchestra; yet the opening Symphony movements and most of the accompaniments to Mendelssohn's beautiful *Lohengrin* were quite well rendered, and the chorus singing was with slight exceptions excellent. MME. TIETJENS delivered the first solo: "Praise thou the Lord, O my Soul" with great energy and fervor, and in her noble and commanding style, with full, sweet, penetrating tones. In the Duet: "I waited for the Lord," which she sang with Miss CLARA SMART, a light but pleasing Soprano, her tones seemed not so sympathetic as they are sometimes; but the sentence announcing: "The night is departing, departing!" rang out with thrilling and inspiring splendor; it seemed to inspire the whole mass of singers, for never have we heard them sing the extremely difficult chorus which immediately follows with such

spirit and precision. Mr. TOM KARL's voice was sweet, but hardly equal to the dramatic intensity of the tenor solo; "Watchman, will the night soon pass?"

The *Stabat Mater* showed more signs of hasty and imperfect preparation, not having recently been sung by the Society. Mr. Tom Karl sang *Cujus animam* very acceptably, and all the other tenor solo parts. Miss DRASDIL, with her powerful and telling, but ambiguous voice (at times you would take it for a tenor) achieved one of the great successes of the evening in the Alto Air; *Fac ut portem*; but in the duet: *Quis est homo*, her voice and that of Tietjens did not seem well matched in quality. Indeed all the concerted pieces, including the beautiful quartet: *Quando corpus*, suffered from the imperfect blending of the voices. Mr. T. F. SULLIVAN sang the bass solos with a good solid voice, but in rather a dry style, and not always in perfect tune. MME. TIETJENS was admirable throughout, but seemed to reserve her full power for her incomparably magnificent rendering of the *Inflammatus*, which brought the concert to a splendid climax, the weak fugue, with which Rossini terminates his *Stabat*, being wisely left off. The enthusiasm of the audience knew no bounds; and it was long before they ceased to recall the noble singer, overwhelming her with plaudits. All took leave with regret of one whom all felt to be the noblest living representative of the grand school of vocal art.

"JOSHUA" (performed on Easter Sunday) must lie over.

ADELAIDE PHILLIPS IN OPERA. The *Transcript* has the following announcement of

The *Coming Season of Italian Opera*. The brief series of operatic representations to be given at the Boston Theatre, next week, will be under the direction of a distinguished artistic combination, consisting of Signora Palmieri, Miss Adela de Phillips, Signor Palmieri and Signor Tagliapietra. Signora Maria Palmieri is a soprano of high European reputation. In "Norma," "Il Trovatore," "Semiramide," "Faust," "Lucia," "Un Ballo in Maschera," and a host of other operas, she has won great distinction at the principal opera houses, including La Scala at Milan, the San Carlos at Naples, and the Carlo Fenice at Venice. She has also made a very successful professional tour through South America and Mexico, and was on her way from Mexico to Europe, via New York, when Miss Phillips succeeded in prevailing upon her to appear in Boston. She has never yet sung in the United States. Signor Tito Palmieri is a tenor of excellent ability, well known to all the leading Italian theatres, and also to the opera houses of Paris and London. Of Miss Phillips and Signor Tagliapietra it is unnecessary to speak at length. The latter has within the past two seasons established an enviable reputation, and counts in Boston a large circle of admirers. In addition to this admirable quartette of artists, the troupe will include a magnificent array of talent. Of the abilities of Miss Matilda Phillips, sister of Miss Adelaide, the public have reason to anticipate much. This artiste will probably make her debut in the fine role of Arsace, in "Semiramide." Signorina Persiani, *soprano leggero*, Mr. Tom Karl, tenor, M. Gaston Gottschalk, (brother of the celebrated pianist), baritone, and Signor Bacelli, basso, will also be members of the company. The conductor will be Signor Tomasi, and there will be a full orchestra and a full chorus. The season will open Monday evening, next, probably with "Norma."

MR. AND MRS. WILLIAM SHERWOOD, both Americans, (the latter will be pleasantly remembered in this city as Miss Mary Fay) have lately given a concert in the Sing-Akademie at Berlin, of which the entire Press there speaks in terms of highest praise. Two passages translated in the *Advertiser* are a fair specimen of the notices which lie before us in a large roll of German newspapers.

The *Fremdenblatt* speaks as follows:—"Mr. Sherwood is one of the most talented of the numerous pianists who have been educated by Professor Kullak. It is superfluous to speak of an admirable developed technique in connection with a pupil of Kullak's, and equally needless to say what influence the master's taste has had upon the pupil's, as manifested both in the choice of a programme and in the thoroughly artistic comprehension of the pieces selected. In both respects Mr. Sherwood has satisfied a high standard of requirement. We have seldom heard so good a playing of Bach's fugue in C-moll, in the transcription by Liszt. The quietness and certainty with which the great technical difficulties of this work were managed, the plastic presentation of its themes, the clearness with which its significance was interpreted, marked this performance as one of prominent artistic value."

The *Montags-Zeitung* remarks: "A touch which gives the fullest range in shading, presenting extreme delicacy as well as the greatest force, a brilliant technique and a depth of feeling, prove Mr. Sherwood to possess an individuality in the treatment of the piano which, in the directness of its expression, has clearly the marks of blood-relationship with that of the Titan Rubinstein." Mrs. Sherwood is spoken of in the *Deutscher Reichs-Anzeiger* as "an excellent mistress of the piano, full of power and of artistic execution." She has spent the past three years in musical study in Berlin, Cassel and Weimar. Our people will have the opportunity to judge for themselves, as Mr. and Mrs. Sherwood intend to appear before a Boston audience about the middle of May.

Music in New York.

NEW YORK, APRIL 10, 1876. In my last letter I inadvertently omitted mention of the fifth concert of the New York Philharmonic Society, at the Academy of Music, on Saturday evening March 17th. At this concert and at the general rehearsal preceding it, Mr. Geo. Matzka took the place at the conductor's stand usually occupied by Mr. Bergmann, and the fact that Mr. Matzka was able to do this creditably, at very short notice, speaks volumes for his ability as a musician, as any one having an idea of the nature of a conductor's duties can readily understand.

The programme was one of the best which the Society has offered this season. It began with a Symphony by Raff, No. 2, in C, which, although it does not approach the "Lenore" and "Im Walde" symphony, is nevertheless sufficiently interesting to merit a place on the programme. Part Second opened with that transcendently beautiful symphony of Schubert's, unfinished, like the window in Aladdin's tower; and Spohr's overture "Faust," Op. 60 ended the list.

The solo performer was Mr. Joseph White, who has already appeared at one of the Philharmonic Concerts earlier in the season. The policy of securing a good instrumental soloist, even though the same name shall appear on the bills more than once in a season, is a very great improvement upon the course too long pursued by the society of making the stage of the Academy an asylum for broken down vocalists to whom 'twere charity to listen. The most conspicuous merits of Sig. White's playing are the accuracy of his stopping and the perfect purity of his intonation. His defects are a want of power in bowing and a lack of breadth in his style, which is sometimes felt in his conception of classical music. In him are lacking just those traits which bring Wieniawski into the front ranks of the interpreters of such music,—the nerve power, and broad sweeping bow. Too frequently, however, Wieniawski, like Ole Bull's Irishman, plays "by main strength be jabbers," and his rapid passages are often rasping.

Sig. White's playing is characterized by refinement rather than by power; although his remarkable intonation makes every note from his violin distinct and penetrating. Being recalled after his first piece, a *Ballade* by Vieuxtemps, he played a graceful composition which we understand is his own. The second piece allotted him on the programme was Bach's magnificent *Clavanna* in D minor, and, for encore, a *Gavotte*, also by Bach. Both of these pieces were well played and elicited great applause from the audience.

With regard to the orchestral performance we have noticed, for many years past, that it is always better towards the end of the winter than at the beginning; the improvement being due to the practice of the players together in the concerts and frequent rehearsals. Altogether this concert was the most satisfactory of those which have taken place in the Academy this season.

March 28th to April 1st, was a memorable week. Three evening concerts and two matinees by Dr. Von Buelow, at Chickering Hall, with programmes, as in the week preceding, of solid pianoforte music with no distracting elements. (They were the same which he gave in Boston a few weeks since.)

The audience was larger than during the Beethoven week. The variety of selections performed made the bill more attractive to the public, but at no time was the hall filled, the usual ceremony of dead-heading the "profession" being omitted by the management.

From Beethoven to Chopin is a long leap; and the programme of Monday evening demanded very different qualities from those hitherto displayed by the performer; yet the Chopin recital was to us the most interesting of the series. We do not go to the length of believing that Dr. Von Buelow really is inspired by the fitful and erratic genius of the Chopin music; but the companionship of Liszt, who is a player after Chopin's own heart, must have left its mark on his performance. We do not mean to say that Dr. Von Buelow merely imitates Liszt, but rather that he is so much an artist that he could hardly fail of profiting by such valuable hints as were thus thrown in his way. We felt therefore that, by his playing, we should be drawn nearer to Chopin and the result justified the anticipation.

The programme included a number of those pieces which are continually played at in our concert rooms by pianists great and small; and we wonder how many of those gentlemen, having listened to Dr. Von Buelow, would again attempt the familiar Nocturne op. 27, No. 2, the *Ballade* in G minor, the three Waltzes op. 34, or the *Berceuse*. The latter Dr. Von Buelow plays as we are told that Chopin himself always did, with only a very slight accentuation of the bass, while the delicacy of his touch is something indescribable. In the bold heroic measures and martial coloring of the *Poisonaise* he was no less striking.

On Saturday evening, April 8, the Brooklyn Philharmonic Society gave the last concert of an unusually brilliant season. The selections performed were the first and the ninth Symphonies, and the Trio "Tremate empitremate," all by Beethoven. The New York Oratorio society did the vocal part of the Symphony, and the Quartet comprised Miss Clementine Lasar, Miss Henne, Mr. H. A. Bischoff and Mr. Franz Remmert. The trio was sung by Miss Lasar and Messrs. Bischoff and Remmert. A. A. C.

From a Homesick Absentee.

PHILADELPHIA, April 19, 1876.

For Dwight's Journal of Music:

The Boston Handel and Haydn Society has made a great gain in public estimation by their recent performances, [almost in the nature of a festival], and musicians here and elsewhere are not slow in acknowledging it. The performance of that stupendous creation of Bach, the St. Matthew Passion, for the first time in this country with any degree of completeness, is an event worthy of note; and though some may have gone to listen in the expectation of being simply pleased, and were, as a natural consequence, disappointed in their expectations, we say to such, you must make yourself acquainted with the work, and then, and only then, you will be gratified, your soul will be elevated while listening to that wondrous story of our Savior's trials and death as told to us through the medium of song; and such song as the world never heard before nor since.

Let no discouraging reports deter the Handel and Haydn Society from giving the public occasional opportunities, say once in each season if possible, of listening to that most sublime creation of musical art.

And then the Joshua of Handel for the first time likewise! It really makes the blood tingle in one's veins to read of such things and to be deprived, for the first time in many years, of the pleasure of listening to them.

You may well ask what has all this to do with Philadelphia? I answer it has much to do with this place, for if the parent society sets a high standard, all others will seek to emulate it, and if the contrary were the custom how soon we should sink to meaner work! The Handel and Haydn Society of Boston is acknowledged by all as standing at the head of all similar organizations in this country, and a thrill of just pride is experienced whenever the name of the society is spoken in the presence of any one who has ever been associated with it.

The great Centennial chorus inaugurated for the opening day, numbering some eight or nine hundred, are holding their weekly rehearsals under Mr. Buck and Mr. Thomas alternately, and a successful musical opening of the great exposition is anticipated; but your regular correspondent will tell your readers all about that and I will not enlarge upon it. L. B. B.

MERMET'S "JOAN OF ARC." The Paris correspondent of the London *Times* telegraphs to that journal on April 5: "The first performance of Mermet's opera of *Joan of Arc* was given this evening. It is scarcely possible for any pen to do justice to the brilliant aspect of the audience which crowded the Grand Opera to-night. Fourteen thousand requests for places had been sent to the Director. The wildest attempts were made to secure a stall, a chair, a stool, or even standing room. It is now ten years since any new grand opera written for the Paris stage was brought out, and that, too, was one of M. Mermet's entitled *Roland at Roncevaux*. *Joan of Arc*, of which M. Mermet wrote not only the music but also the words, was to have been brought out at the old opera-house just when that building was destroyed by fire. That was a lucky accident for M. Mermet, for his opera will have a longer run under present circumstances. There is not much to be said of the libretto. It is a succession of tableaux rather than a drama in which one act is bound to another. The first tableau represents the hamlet of Vaucouleurs, where Joan was born, and the arrival of Joan at the court. The second tableaux, the Court of Charles VII. at Chinon and the arrival of Joan and her departure for the battle-field. The third tableaux, the Camp at Blois, an orgie in the camp, appearance of Joan and her departure for the combat. The fourth tableaux, the Siege of Orleans and Joan's tent under the walls of the city. The fifth tableau, the coronation of the King in the Cathedral of Rheims. There the composer has closed the series of his tableaux and Joan's biography. I shall not say much of the music. His learned harmonious composition, from which melody is banished, has neither the sweet and charming music of Rossini, nor has it the grave, strong, anxious *elan* of Meyerbeer. It is something between the great Italian and the great German school. There is more labor than inspiration and more conviction than enthusiasm in it. Madlle. Krauss and Fane were cheered as warmly and as frequently as opportunity offered. The latter plays the part of the King, the former that of Joan. In the house praise was scanty, and the author excited but small applause. I think it will be well not to trust to the first impression, and that the opera will be better liked when it is better known. What really excited genuine enthusiasm to-night was the scenery."

Special Notices.

DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF THE
LATEST MUSIC,
Published by Oliver Ditson & Co.

Vocal, with Piano Accompaniment.

Where the sweet Arbutus grows. Song and Chorus. D. 3. d to D. Prior. 30

"Then I'll meet you, Rosalinda,
Where the silver streamlet flows."

A very sweet song and chorus in popular style.
Love Dews linger on the Grass. E. 3. d to F. Booth. 30

"Yet only Love can bring
Their glory to our feet,"
Shows a pure and elegant taste in all the words,
—in all the music.

Sleep, dearest, sleep. Serenade. Ab. 3. E to F. Waud. 35

"Only the night winds free
Around thy door are sighing."
An unusually good serenade, neither too lulling
nor too startling.

My Cross of Moss. Db. 4. d to F. Muller. 30

"Thou oft shalt speak of Jesus crucified."
A religious song of great pathos and beauty.

If. G. 3 d to E. Keens. 35

"I'd give my love a cross of pearls,
And make her always wear it."
A very playful and pretty love song.

Walk at Sunset. Duet. Soprano Voices. G. 4. b to g. Fiori. 50

"See, the setting sun is glowing
To yon sparkling sands away!"
The lower voice may well be an Alto or Mezzo-Soprano. A bright, sparkling duet.

Instrumental.

The Little Shepherdess. A Summer Idyl for Piano. Lithographic Title. G. 3. Wilson. 60

Of the same general style as "The Little Wanderer," and "The Shepherd Boy," by the same composer, and is a charming composition.

La Petite Mariee Galop. (The Little Bride). G. 2. Aronsen. 40

Neat little French airs, prettily combined.
Forest Scenes. 9 Piano Pieces by R. Schumann. each 30

No. 1. Entrance. (Eintritt). Bb. 3.

"2. Hunters in Ambush. (Jager auf der Lauer). D minor. 4.

The 9 "scenes" which these commence, without being purely descriptive music, correspond admirably to the "moods" excited in the mind by the situations indicated by the titles. The remaining ones, "Flower," "Haunted Nook," "Prophet Bird," etc. have their own peculiarities and beauties.

Hard Pan March. C. 3. Catlin. 30

There's nothing like good hard pan to march on,
and this is a brisk air to step to.

Flower Festival Polka. Eb. 4. Strauss. 30

A pretty name for a brilliant Strauss piece.
Boulangere des Ecus. Valse. 3. Aronsen. 60

Bright airs from an Opera Bouffe, by Offenbach.
Princess Wunderhold. C. 4. Biehl. 40

"Princess "Wondrous-fair," is here celebrated
in successions of bright, crisp, staccato passages,
with others to contrast. General effect very pleasing.

Brilliance. Medley Quadrille. 3. Schacht. 40

The airs are "Pretty as a Picture," "Put my little shoes away," "Tommy make room," "One little sweet kiss," "The day when you'll forget me," "If I only knew," and "No harm in kissing."

Valse des Perles. 3. Lamothe. 65

A set of 4 waltzes, with introduction and Coda,
full of rich melody.

Eleanore Waltz. 3. Parlow. 50

Melodies rather smooth, gliding and tranquil
than brilliant, but very satisfying and tasteful.

Valses der Amoureuces. 3. Lamothe. 60

Lovers' (Amoureuces) Waltzes, should be the
most agreeable of any, and these cannot fail to please.

My Sweet Pollywog. Galop. Lithograph Title. D. 3. Tysington. 50

Pollywog takes to a gallop more naturally than
to singing. A lively galop for dogs or men.

ABBREVIATIONS.—Degrees of difficulty are marked from 1 to 7. The key is denoted by a capital letter, as C, Bb, etc. A large Roman letter marks the lowest and the highest note if on the staff, small Roman letters if below or above the staff. Thus: "C. 5, c to E" means "Key of C, Fifth degree, lowest letter, c on the added line below, highest letter, E on the 4th space."

